June 10, 2009

Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)

Sotoyome RCD – Zaffaroni, Grape Creek Fish Habitat Improvement, Phase 1
WDID No. 1B09025WNSO

Sonoma County

On February 13, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Valerie Sherron of Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, on behalf of Lea & Alex Zaffaroni and the Sonoma County Water Agency (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities associated with a fish habitat improvement project on Grape Creek. The project involves construction of eight fish habitat structures, comprised of logs and boulders on Grape Creek, located at 4106 Wine Creek Road, near the City of Healdsburg , latitude 38.654985°N, longitude 122.945613°W, Sonoma County. The project begins approximately 9,800 feet upstream from the confluence of Grape and Dry Creeks and continues to the confluence of Grape and Wine Creek. The proposed project will cause permanent impacts to approximately 193 linear feet of waters of the State associated with Grape Creek in the Warm Springs Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.24, Russian River Hydrologic Area 114.00. Grape Creek is a tributary to Dry Creek and thence the Russian River.

The purpose of the project is to satisfy a mitigation requirement of the federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation Biological Opinion for Water Supply, Flood Control Operations, and Channel Maintenance conducted U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Sonoma County Water Agency, and Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District in the Russian River watershed (RRBO). The project is one of five projects that the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) must implement as required in the Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (RPA) in the RRBO. The RPA requires that SCWA enhance 730 square meters of in-stream spawning and rearing habitat in two reaches of Grape Creek. The project covered by this application represents Phase 1 of the RPA requirement for Grape Creek for the upper 1,250 foot reach. Phase 2 is of Grape Creek enhancement is located further down stream and is approximately a 1,000 foot long reach. The project will increase instream pool cover and shelter values and deepen pools by installing eight complex log and boulder structures within an approximate 1,250 foot reach of Grape Creek.

The Applicant proposes to install and anchoring log and boulder structures at eight locations within a 1,250 foot reach of Grape Creek. These structures will be placed by an excavator operated from the top of bank, and anchored down in the stream by hand crews. The objective of the log and boulder structures is to improve instream rearing habitat for juvenile coho salmon as well as. The project involves the placement of approximately 14 redwood logs that range from 18 feet to 25 feet long and approximately 1.5 feet to 3 feet in diameter. These logs will be placed in the stream according to guidelines set forth in the California Department of Fish and Game's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual. Logs will be anchored

throughout the project reach using 1 inch bolts or rebar in approximately 12, 3 foot diameter boulders and 16 mature alders that range form 12 inches to 20 inches in diameter. Applicant will submit a report detailing the project after it is installed. Yearly reports will be submitted for a period of five years, or until the project is deemed successful by the permitting agencies, detailing how the restoration is progressing.

Applicant also proposes additional restoration, as this reach of Grape Creek the riparian corridor is very narrow and there is a limited amount of mature riparian vegetation. In order to increase cover, shading, as well as to recruit a long term source of large woody debris Applicant shall plant a sufficient number of coastal redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) trees that shall be planted throughout the project reach on 10 foot-centers. As currently proposed, the estimated length of the project reach is 1,250 feet or 2,500 feet total linear feet; therefore the applicant shall plant 250 seedling, or larger, coastal redwood trees. These plantings shall be managed for a minimum of 5 consecutive years immediately following planting. The applicant shall attain 60% (i.e. 150 individuals) survival of thriving trees after 5 years after having been planted

Compensatory mitigation is not required as the project itself consists of habitat restoration, and is in itself mitigation.

The Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, submitted a Mitigated Negative Declaration to the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2009032038) on March 12, 2009, pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Game on February 17, 2009, Notification Number: 1600-2009-0059-3, for a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement.

Applicant has applied to US Army Corps of Engineers on February 17, 2009, for a Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit, Number 27, Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Establishment, and Enhancement Activities, case No. 2009-00117N.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.